

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 SS-15 SP-02 PM-04 L-03 IO-13

INR-07 INRE-00 SSO-00 /060 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1669

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DEPT PLEASE PASS USMISSION GENEVA AS INFO IMMEDIATE

GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR CARTER

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, EAIR, EFIN, XMB, LI

SUBJ: EXIM DENIAL FINANCE JET AIRCRAFT FOR LIBERIA

REF: (A) MONROVIA 6076, (B) GENEVA 6830, (C) STATE 212326

1. APPARENTLY OUR COMMENTS ON EXIM ACTION (REF A) AND THOSE OF AMBASSADOR CARTER (REF B) RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXIM ACTION (REF C) SENT. WE REGRET ANNOUNCEMENT MADE WITHOUT OUR INPUT, AND FEEL THAT THERE MUST BE BETTER WAY OF COORDINATING OUR EFFORTS.

2. WE REALIZE THAT EXIM MUST MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON OWN CONSIDERATIONS, BUT WE NOT SURE POINTS WE RAISED IN REF A WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THIS PARTICKLAO DECISION. AS WE HAVE INDICATED, EMBASSY ALL ALONG HAS CONSIDERED THIS STRAIGHT COMMERCIAL SALE, AND THERE IS NO QUESTION HERE THAT GOL BASING ITS CONSIDERATION ON COMMERCIAL ASPECTS OF AIRCRAFT'S OPERATION. NEVERTHE LESS, EXIM'S DENIAL COULD HAVE SERIOUS POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS.

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EM WE HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT IS WRONG WHEN IT PRESUMES THAT

MCDONNELL DOUGLAS WILL INFORM GOL, IN FACT FEEL THAT FIRM SHOULD BE URGED NOT RPT NOT TO DO SO AT THIS TIME. EMBASSY CERTAINLY DOES NOT INTEND INFORM GOL EXIM CONSIDERED TRANSACTION "INAPPROPRIATE" FOR REASONS GIVEN IN PARA 2, REF C, EVEN IF ASKED. WE FEEL GOL MIGHT WELL CONSIDER THIS POSITION PATRONIZING AND REACT NEGATIVELY TO AN ATTITUDE WHICH COULD BE TAKEN AS "USG KNOWS BETTER WHAT IS GOOD FOR YOU THAN YOU DO." THIS PARTICULARLY TRUE IF GOL CAN POINT TO EXIM-FINANCED SALES ELSEWHERE. IN ORDER TO BE PREPARED FOR SUCH AN APPROACH BY GOL, WOULD APPRECIATE INFO ON AIRCRAFT SALES TO LDCS REQUESTED BY AMBASSADOR CARTER (REF B) SOONEST. IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO KNOW IF 737 SALE TO AIR ZAIRE (WE UNDERSTAND AIRCRAFT USED IN EXECUTIVE CONFIGURATION) WAS EXIM-FINANCED.

4. TIMING OF EXIM ACTION COULDN'T BE WORSE COMING JUST PRIOR TO PRESIDENT'S STATE VISIT. GOL OFFICIALS MOST INTIMATELY CONCERNED IN PROPOSED PURCHASE (MOST NOTABLY MINFIN PHILLIPS AND CLOSE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORS) MEET REGULARLY IN VISIT CORE GROUP SESSIONS, AND ON EACH OCCASION PROPOSED AIRCRAFT PURCHASE HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF DISCUSSIONS. IT UNQUESTIONABLY WILL ARISE ON THE NEXT SUCH OCCASION, PARTICULARLY IF GOL AWARE OF EXIM DECISION. EMBASSY PUZZLED AS TO BEST RESPONSE.

5. WE ALSO AT A LOSS ON HOW TO HANDLE CONTINUING SALES EFFORTS. FOR EXAMPLE, COMMATT RECEIVED PHONE CALL YESTERDAY FROM BROWN OF BOEING WHO INDICATED HE ARRIVING MONROVIA NEXT WEEK AND REQUESTED WE MAKE APPOINTMENT WITH FINMIN PHILLIPS. OF COURSE COMMATT DID NOT INFORM BROWN OF PENDING EXIM ANNOUNCEMENT TO MCDONNELL DOUGLAS, BUT EMBASSY FEELS THAT IT NOW CAUGHT IN BIND OF ASSISTING BOEING IN EXPENSIVE SALES EFFORTS THAT MAY BE DOOMED TO FAILURE.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST FULL PARTICULARS EXIM DECISION REQUESTED PARA 6, REF A AND INFORMATION REQUESTED PARA 2, REF B SOONEST. WE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED TO KNOW IF EXIM CONSIDERED COMMERICAL USE OF AIRCRAFT IN MAKING DECISION. ALSO SUGGEST THAT MCDONNELL DOUGLAS BE URGED NOT RPT NOT TO INFORM GOL OF DECISION AT THIS TIME.

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NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED GENEVA.

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